

# STANDARD SYSTEM OF COMPETING TRUCK COSTS IS A NECESSITY

**Truck Authority Declares Present Systems Vary So Much That Real Comparisons Are Impossible; He Outlines Some of the Data Which Should Be Covered in a Model Cost System.**

By S. V. NORTON,  
Manager of Truck Tires Sales of  
the B. F. Goodrich Rubber Company.

Notes—Mr. Norton is recognized as an authority on motor truck maintenance. His "Motor Trucks of America," issued annually, is regarded as the handbook of the industry. The present subject forms the introductory article to the 1918 volume.—Editor.

**P**ERHAPS one of the most urgent needs of the motor truck industry today for a standard system of keeping track of truck operating costs. A large number of truck operators are either not saving the money they should from their trucks. Many of them are actually losing money. Why is this? Simply because truck owners have been too busy delivering their goods to keep track of their costs. They have not been able to keep track of their costs. They have not been able to keep track of their costs.

With the necessity for war time economies the need for keeping track of motor truck costs is more urgent than ever. In the past many cost systems have been devised and distributed to truck operators. Some of these systems were generally compiled by experts and were complete, they were uniform and different systems treated various items of expense in different ways.

A standard system of keeping track of motor truck costs would provide a common language by which the experience of all truck operators in the country could be related and understood.

It would unlock a great storehouse of information which is at present closed to the truck owner.

Any individual system, however well designed, cannot serve the motor truck industry adequately so long as several other cost systems, which also may be well designed, are in existence. The difficulty comes from a lack of uniformity in the treatment of various items of expense.

Owners who use systems which have been compiled by authorities on motor truck accounting or by general experts, accountants, and which are generally complete, show results which are not subject to comparison because of varying methods of computing identical items. There are, for instance, at least four methods of figuring depreciation.

The truck operators, A and B, use systems devised by competent accountants. A's cost system provides that depreciation shall be figured at 25 percent a year, charging off the

entire cost at the end of five years, but B's system declares that depreciation must be figured on a mileage basis, allowing 80,000 miles as the expected life of the truck. Both operators use the same systems devised by experts, yet the difference in computing this one item alone may amount to as much as \$200 a year.

If all or even the great majority of truck owners began to figure depreciation according to the standard formula an enormous gain would be accomplished, for a common denominator would be established by which one truck could be compared with thousands of trucks in respect to this item.

A well conceived motor truck cost system should reveal:

Number of trips.  
Cost per mile.  
Total loads in units.  
Average load in units.  
Round trip distance.  
Unit . . . . . miles.  
Miles per gallon of gasoline.  
Miles per gallon of oil.  
Standing time at plant in hours and minutes.

Running time in hours and minutes (including stops).  
Average loading time per trip.  
Average speed in miles per hour.  
Estimated running time per mile.  
Estimated time per customer's stop (in minutes).

Cost per day (at work).  
Cost per mile.  
Cost per unit.  
Cost per unit mile.

Now suppose a standard system were adopted and widely used which would enable a great many truck operators to compute these items in the same way. The benefits to truck users would be enormous. A comparison of figures would bring to light many possibilities of economy. As well as many causes of waste. Expenses of figures would have a go. Time saving and money saving ideas would spread throughout the truck using public.

Take the matter of supplies: A great deal of doubt exists today in the mind of truck owners as to which oil, which tires, which accessories of all kinds are the "best." Many owners admit there seems to be no way of finding out. Suppose now that a considerable number of truck owners kept their tire costs in the same way.

The reports from dozens, perhaps hundreds, of truck owners rendered in a uniform way would be a convincing story. They would establish proof where heretofore there was guess work.

Consider the matter of maintenance or repair. Every reputable truck maker is searching constantly for the perfect form his product. This world is his laboratory, and he is looking for nothing better than to receive reports from all his customers which would describe the shortcomings and lay bare the weak points of his truck. Unfortunately this information is not readily available to him except in a haphazard way. And even in those rare cases where he does receive the complete history of an installation, the story is apt to be, as it were, in a "foreign language," which must be translated and interpreted before it can be of use. The same may be said of the maker of parts.

What former attempts to establish a standard cost system have lacked seems to be abundantly supplied in the truck owners' well under way by the Truck Owners' Conference, Inc., at Chicago. It is hoped that this movement will result in a cost system being approved which may fully take the title of a standard system. The movement is by far the most encouraging sign of action toward the end that the industry has yet seen, and as such deserves the support of every truck owner, manufacturer and maker of truck parts.

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**Tiemer Says the Railroad Cars Would Be Released for the Long Hauls.**

"Railroads are absolutely unable to handle the traffic and the problem must be solved by motor truck transportation," said A. C. Tiemer, local representative of the United States Motor Truck company when interviewed recently. "There is only one solution," continued Mr. Tiemer, "and that is to compel the motor truck to do as much of the nation's freight carrying as possible. The quickest road to this success is going to be an absolute embargo on all short haul freight. Let the motor truck take care of all freight within 50 miles or even a greater distance from all cities. The railroad will then be able to concentrate on long hauls. There will be thus stopped much of the constant stopping and the shunting of freight cars."

While an absolute embargo on all short haul freight is a step toward the use of freight cars as storage houses on sidings. The compelling of motor trucks to haul freight every section within 25 to 50 miles or even longer distances from cities, the one who is placing his right now is the freight train, and the motor truck many abuses that exist at present. With the government control of railroads, I believe that this will be accomplished, and the motor truck will come into its own as the nation in these times of peril.

"Cost of hauling by motor truck has been steadily reduced and is extremely low. The motor truck is now more economical for short hauls, than the freight train, and the adopting of the rule to bar demurrage, and the closing of railway sidings would save the country a great deal and correct evils which, existing today, are a menace to every living being."

"This change is going to come about, and the wise business man is the one who is placing his right now. Even though he does not want delivery until later the order should be placed with the motor truck. The short haul freight rule the business man is going to be caught napping at."

Yes, he will, for he will have plenty of trucks to care for his business or suffer through his oversight. A good horse sense for the business man is to protect himself and believe that every truck salesman should do everything within his power to show business men the benefits of the motor truck, and the benefits or preparedness for a future condition which is certain to arise through the exigencies of the times."

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**Place Truck Man in Charge of Company and Plans to Expand Business.**

Raymond R. Stamm, who has been in charge of International truck sales for the Oakland Auto Sales company for the past year, was appointed manager of the company, last Monday, in place of R. A. Hart, who resigned to return to San Antonio and enter business for himself.

Mr. Stamm is no stranger to the motorists of El Paso or the south-west. He was connected with the factory organization of the International truck for several years and made his headquarters at Albuquerque up to two years ago, when he was transferred to Denver. He operated out of Denver until he came to El Paso, in Albuquerque, Mr. Stamm was a reputation as a thorough sportsman and a keen motorist. He was a member of the New Mexico Game association.

"I'm not going to take the world by the tail and give it a swing," said Mr. Stamm. "But I believe that the Oakland Auto Sales company has been changed by motor trucks to cars and international trucks and will make a feature of service."

The Oakland company recently opened a battery station and W. Klinger is now in charge of the electrical work for the company.

My engine seems to run all right when standing, but as soon as it is called upon to start, it will not start. I have tried everything I can think of, but it will not start. I have tried everything I can think of, but it will not start. I have tried everything I can think of, but it will not start.

There is no question that your trouble is caused by poor mixture and bad timing. The mixture is too rich. Your carburetor is adjustable and if you will turn the needle as far down as it will go, it will start. If it will not start, you can get a fair good mixture, which can be further changed by other adjustments. Run as lean as possible. If after making the adjustments suggested, you still have trouble, write me and I will burn the carburetor in the presence of oxygen: this will not injure the engine. If the work is properly done, the carburetor will be in an atmosphere of oxygen, but there is little chance of a rough spot or the piston or cylinder head becoming incandescent. You should be careful about the spark plugs when using oxygen. The better way being to remove them and plug the holes, or feed the oxygen through the spark plug holes.

What grade of oil should be used? I will tell you. I have found that having starting trouble, that a friend tells me is due to too heavy an oil. Could it be? By all means try using a light oil, unless the maker of your oil specifically warns against it. Cold thickens oil and when a heavy oil is used in winter it tends to become pasty, when the weather is very cold, and this makes starting trouble.

Would it benefit the operation of my 1915 runabout to install a V-type radiator? I have been told that the V-type is more efficient than the ordinary flat radiator. What do you think?—Jerry.

It is claimed that the V-type radiator gives better cooling power than the flat type. Undoubtedly the V-type is more efficient than the flat type. Undoubtedly the V-type is more efficient than the flat type. Undoubtedly the V-type is more efficient than the flat type.

Is the distributor of the magneto timed with the breaker points on the armature? Hardy, Jr.

Yes, the magneto is connected with the drive so that the points separate when the number one cylinder is in firing position. The distributor arm must be on the number one segment.

I am having trouble with a metallic ringing sound between the universal joint and the axle of my car, which makes its appearance when I am operating with the clutch out. Can you tell me how to get rid of it?—H. B. C.

Try tightening the dust collar on the universal and I am pretty sure that the noise will vanish.

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## WHEN THE MOTOR MISFIRES

Popular Science Expert Tells Herald Readers Why It Does and How to Remedy the Faults; Valves Cause Some Trouble.

**ONE** of the commonest faults in the internal combustion engine is misfiring. Naturally this complaint varies in malignancy, sometimes afflicting only one cylinder, sometimes more, often being merely temporary, due to some incorrect adjustment, again being seemingly permanent and calling for drastic action.

Obviously misfiring interferes with the satisfactory operation of the engine. It means that one or more cylinders is not firing, so that those remaining in operation are carrying on all the work. In a six cylinder engine misfiring is not so annoying as in a four, this is obvious, also it is harder to detect. In an eight or 12 one of the cylinders may be cut out and the ordinary amateur driver will